

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, YO

SUBJECT: JURE BILIC ON NEW FACTION

REF: BELGRADE 0629

1. JURE BILIC, MEMBER OF PRESIDUM OF LCY EXECUTIVE BUREAU, RENEWED HIS WARNING OF NEW CENTRALIST FACTION ALSO EXPOSED BY VLADIMIR BAKARIC AND STIPE SUVAR (SEE REFTTEL). IN SPEECH FEB 9 TO ZAGREB CITY LC COMMITTEE CARRIED BY TANJUG, BILIC FOLLOWED SAME GENERAL LINES AS IN EARLIER EXPOSITIONS IN DESCRIBING BROAD-BASED CENTRALIST MOVEMENT WHICH IS IN PROCESS OF CONSOLIDATION PARTICULARLY IN CROATIA BUT ALSO ELSEWHERE. NEW FEATURE WAS CHARGE THAT FACTION ATTEMPTS TO EXPLOIT "GLORIOUS NAME OF VETERANS UNION" BY ADOPTING ITS SLOGANS, TO CREATE IMPRESSION OF LEFT WITHOUT, AT LEAST AS REPORTED IN TANJUG, EXPLAINING CONNECTION BETWEEN THEM AND NEW FACTION. (BILIC'S REMARKS ON INTELLECTUALS WILL BE REPORTED IN SEPTTEL.)

2. COMMENT: ADDITION TO BILIC'S VOICE TO FAST FORMING CHORUS OF ATTACKS ON NEW THREAT FROM RIGHT FURTHER CONFIRMS THAT PARTY CONSIDERS THIS MORE THAN STRAW MAN. TIMING (ON EVE OF REPUB-
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LICAN/PROVINCIAL CONGRESSES) ALSO SUPPORTS ARGUMENT THAT THERE IS

EARNEST STRUGGLE INSIDE CROATIAN PARTY WHICH BILIC, BAKARIC AND
SUVAR WARN CAN SPREAD TO OTHER PARTS OF YUGOSLAVIA. JUST WHAT IS
AT STAKE STILL OBSCURE SINCE CHARGES ARE CAST IN VOCABULARLY
SO NEW THAT TANJUG HAD TO ISSUE CORRECTIONS TO SOME TERMS AFTER
BILIC SPEECH WAS RELEASED, E.G., "NEO-STALINISM" IN THE INITIAL
VERSION WAS CORRECTED TO "CENTRALIST BUREAUCRATISM". FURTHERMORE,
NO NAMES HAVE BEEN MENTIONED. BUT THIS MAY BE BEGINNING OF DRIVE
TO SHOW THAT PARTY, IN REACTING TO NATIONALISTS, LIBERALS AND
MOST RECENTLY LEFT-WING INTELLECTUALS, COULD MOVE TOO FAR TOWARD
CENTRALISM. IN HAVING WARNINGS ISSUED ON DANGERS OF RENASCENT
STALINISM, PARTY MAY BE PREPARING FOR MOVE AWAY FROM THOSE WHO TOO
WARMLY WELCOMED RETURN OF FIRMER CONTROL WITH SUPPRESSION OF
CROATIAN NATIONALISTS IN 1971 AND SERBIAN LIBERALS IN 1972, THINK-
ING, IN BILIC'S WORDS, THAT THEIR TIME HAS COME.
JOHNSON

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